



NUTRITION for people living with CANCER

A guide for
patients and
families



南華醫院

HOSPITAL LAM WAH EE

Debunk The Myth Of Cancer Diet

Q

Will eating sugar feed my cancer cell?

A

No. No studies have shown that eating sugar will make your cancer worse or shrink or disappear. However, a high-sugar diet may contribute to excess weight gain, and obesity is associated with an increased risk of developing cancer.

Q

Are there any herbal products that can cure cancer?

A

No. No herbal products have been shown to be effective for treating cancer. In fact, some herbal products may be harmful when taken during chemotherapy or radiation therapy because they may interfere with how these treatments work.

Q

Does high intake of alkaline food such as green vegetables, fruits and lemon help to cure cancer?

A

No. Cancer cell cannot live in overly alkaline environment, neither can any of the other cells in our body. Even though our blood is usually slightly alkaline, this is tightly regulated by our body in a perfectly healthy range. So, it will not be affected by what you eat.

Q

Should I avoid eating chicken, fish (e.g. Ikan kembong) and eggs?

A

No. Protein is very important to keep your body functioning and is also needed for growth and repair. Protein is found in almost all body cells and has many roles such as, to fight infections and strengthen the immune system.

Good Nutrition is especially important if you have cancer because both the illness and treatments can change the way you eat.

Proteins

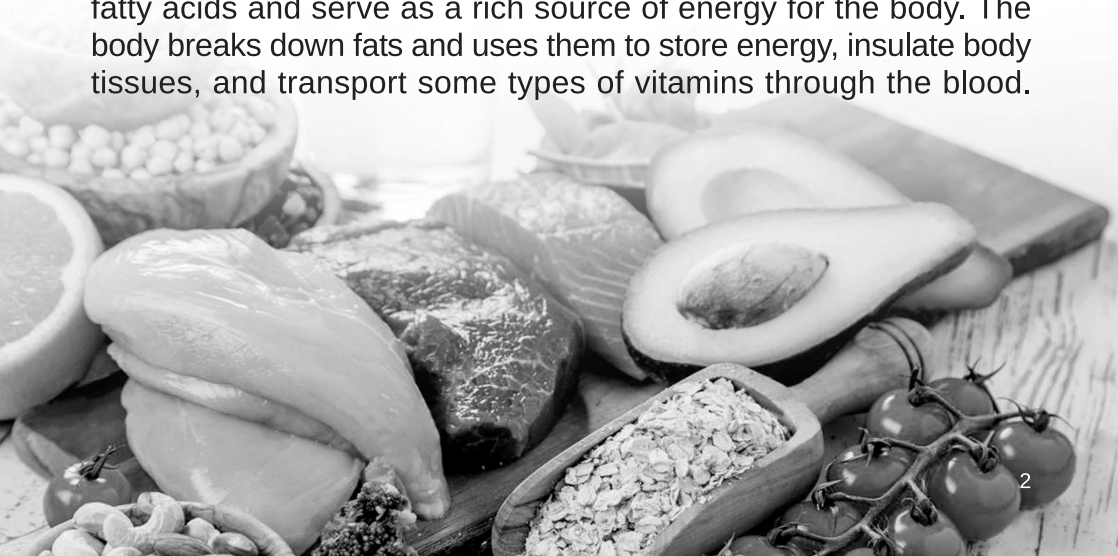
We need protein for growth, to repair body tissue, and to keep our immune systems healthy. When your body doesn't get enough protein, it might break down muscle for the fuel it needs. This makes it take longer to recover from illness and can lower resistance to infection. People with cancer often need more protein than usual. After surgery, chemotherapy, or radiation therapy, extra protein is usually needed to heal tissues and help fight infection.

Carbohydrates

Carbohydrates are the body's major source of energy. Carbohydrates give the body the fuel it needs for physical activity and proper organ function. The best sources of carbohydrates - fruits, vegetables, and whole grains - also supply needed vitamins and minerals, fiber, and phytonutrients to the body's cells.

Fats

Fats play an important role in nutrition. Fats and oils are made of fatty acids and serve as a rich source of energy for the body. The body breaks down fats and uses them to store energy, insulate body tissues, and transport some types of vitamins through the blood.



High Protein Food

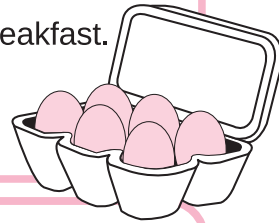
Milk & Dairy Products



- Make a glass of fruit smoothies with milk and yogurt.
- Replace water with milk or yogurt in preparation of cereal and oats.
- Add milk into chocolate, coffee or tea.
- Use milk in Chinese dessert or drinks such as barley, sago pudding or “bubur cha cha”.
- Include cream or cheese sauces on vegetables and pasta.
- Add powdered milk to cream soups, mashed potatoes, and puddings.

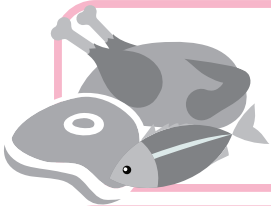
Eggs

- Make omelets, fried egg or scrambled egg for breakfast.
- Add hard-boiled egg into salad.
- Add egg to any kind of soups, porridge or soup desserts.



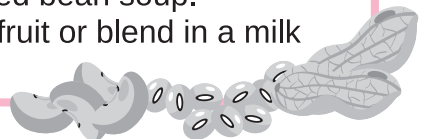
Meats, poultry, and fish

- Add cooked meats to soups, salads, and omelets.
- Mix diced cooked meat into porridge.



Beans, legumes, nuts, and seeds

- Sprinkle seeds or nuts on desserts like fruit, ice cream and pudding.
- Sprinkle white sesame seeds on stir-fried vegetables.
- Make a bowl of desserts such as black sesame soup, sweet peanut soup, green bean soup or red bean soup.
- Spread peanut butter on toast and fruit or blend in a milk shake.



High Calories Food

Butter

- Melt over potatoes, rice, pasta, and cooked vegetables.
- Spread on bread before adding other ingredients to your sandwich.



Cooking Oil

- Add one tablespoon of vegetable oil to steam fish.
- Add one tablespoon of sesame oil into porridge.
- Make stuffed tofu with cucumber by deep-frying the tofu first.
- Pan-fried meat or fish first before adding to porridge.

Sweets, jam, and honey

- Thicken your soup or gravy with corn flour.
- Add honey to bread, oats, French toast, pancakes and crackers.
- Add raisins into oats or fruit salad.
- Add jam to bread, fruits or salad.
- Add coconut milk into desserts or “bubur lambuk”.
- Use ice cream as a topping on cake.



Fun & Easy Recipes



Per serving: 1 glass

Energy (kcal) 586.0

Carbohydrate (g) 54.6

Protein (g) 18.8

Fat (g) 34.9

DIETITIAN'S NOTE

► You can replace avocado with any preferred fruits of your choice (e.g. frozen banana, dragon fruit)

Avocado Milkshake

Prep time: 10 minutes

Serves: 1-2

INGREDIENTS

- 1 avocado, pitted and cubed
- 1 cup of plain yogurt
- 1 cup low fat milk, chilled
- 1 tablespoon of honey
- 5 - 10 ice cubes

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Add half of the avocado, yogurt, milk, honey, lemon juice, and 5 ice cubes into a food processor. Mix until everything blended well.
2. Use a spoon to taste the milkshake. Add more ice if it's too thick.
3. Add the rest of the avocado and mix for a few seconds in order to leave small bits of avocado, so the milkshake will have a better texture.
4. Serve immediately.



Per serving: 1 bowl (small)

Energy (kcal) 378.9

Carbohydrate (g) 53.6

Protein (g) 29.8

Fat (g) 9.6

DIETITIAN'S NOTE

- ▶ Make sure that the soy milk is unsweetened.

Barley Foo-Chuk

Prep time: 10 minutes;

Cook time: 40 minutes

Serves: 4-6

INGREDIENTS

- 100 grams soft bean curd skin sheets, soak in water until soft
- 50 grams barley, rinsed
- 1000ml soy milk (without sugar)
- 3 pandan leaves, tied to a knot
- 130 grams rock sugar
- 300ml water
- 2 eggs, beaten well

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Boil the barley and ginkgo in a pot of water together with pandan leaves until the barley is semi-soft.
2. Add unsweetened soy milk and bean curd into the pot and boil for 20 minutes or until it is slightly thick.
3. Add rock sugar to taste. Sweetness can be adjusted to personal preferences.
4. Turn off the fire and add the egg mixture into the pot while stirring.
5. Ready to serve.



Per serving: 1 unit

| | |
|------------------|-------|
| Energy (kcal) | 139.0 |
| Carbohydrate (g) | 4.0 |
| Protein (g) | 3.0 |
| Fat (g) | 7.3 |

DIETITIAN'S NOTE

- ▶ You can even add mozzarella cheese into the mixture.

Deep-Fried Potatoes Patty

Prep time: 10 minutes;

Cook time: 10 minutes

Serves: 8-10

INGREDIENTS

- 2 cups of mashed potatoes
- 100 gram of grilled chicken fillet, shredded
- 2 onions, cubed and fried
- Half bunch of coriander, finely chopped
- Half bunch of spring onion, finely chopped
- Salt, to taste
- 1 teaspoon of cumin powder
- Black pepper, to taste
- 1 egg, beaten well and use for coating

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Mix all of the chopped ingredients into a big mixing bowl and mix thoroughly.
2. Season it well with black pepper, salt and cumin powder.
3. Shape it into medium sized ball with the palm of your hand before flattening.
4. Coat the potatoes ball in with the beaten eggs and fry until lightly browned.

Food Safety For People With Cancer



Cancer and its treatments such as chemotherapy, radiation therapy and medications can weaken your immune system, making you more susceptible to many types of infections including *foodborne illness (Food poisoning)*.

To avoid contracting a foodborne illness, you must be especially vigilant when *handling, preparing, and consuming food*.

What are the **SYMPTOMS** of foodborne illness?



Fever



Abdominal
Cramps



Nausea



Diarrhea



Vomiting

Food Safety Tips



CLEAN

- Wash hands with warm soapy water before and after handling food.
- Wash, rinse fruits and vegetables, and rub firm-skin fruits and vegetable under running tap water.



SEPARATE

- Separate raw meats and poultry from ready-to-eat foods.
- Use one cutting board only for raw foods and another only for ready-to-eat foods.



COOK

- Cook foods to a safe internal temperature (70°C - 80°C).
- Bring sauces, soups, and gravy to a boil when reheating.
- When cooking in a microwave oven, cover food, stir, and rotate for even cooking.



CHILL

- Refrigerate or freeze perishable foods within 2 hours of cooking or purchasing.
- Never thaw food at room temperature. It is safe to thaw food in the refrigerator, in cold water, or in the microwave.

Foods to AVOID



Raw or undercooked meat, poultry, or seafood

Unpasteurized or raw milk



Raw or undercooked eggs

Foods to EAT



Meat, poultry, and seafood cooked to a safe internal temperature (70°C - 80°C)

Pasteurized milk



Cooked eggs with a firm yolk

Other Dietary Recommendations



Avoid eating at food stalls with poor hygiene.

Avoid buying ready-to-eat food.



Make sure the water is clean or boiled before drinking.

Things That You Should Take Note!



Avoid cooking at high temperature.

Grilling meat over an open flame may cause the formation of cancer-promoting substances.

It is better to cook by placing on a piece of foil or cook in a pan. Besides, do remove the charred or burnt part.



Avoid processed meat

Processed meat applies to any meat which has been modified / processed in order to either improve its taste or extend its shelf life.

The methods of processing are salting, curing, fermentation and smoking. The examples of processed foods are ham, sausages, meat patties, hot dogs and canned food.

Nutrition Tips for Management of Side Effects from Cancer Treatment



Nutrition is an important part of cancer treatment. Eating the right kinds of foods before, during, and after treatment can help you feel better and stay stronger.

Different cancer treatments can cause different kinds of problems that may make it hard to eat or drink. Common eating problems are *loss of appetite, swallowing difficulty, nausea and vomiting, diarrhea, constipation, mouth dryness, mouth or throat pain or sore, taste and smell change and fatigue.*

It is important to manage these eating problems in order to maintain healthy body weight and prevent malnutrition.

Tips For Managing Your Eating Problems

Loss of Appetite

- Eat small high-protein and high-calorie meals every 1-2 hours instead of 3 large meals.
- May consider taking oral nutrition supplements if you are unable to eat enough food to meet your needs. Seek help and information from dietitian.
- Try new foods as this may spark off your appetite.



Swallowing Difficulty

- Eat soft, moist or pureed foods.
- Eat smaller, more frequent meals and snacks.
- Use commercially prepared food thickeners, instant mashed potatoes, infant rice cereal, and / or cornstarch to thicken fluid.
- Suggest to seek help and instruction from speech therapist regarding diet consistency and swallowing techniques.



Nausea / Vomiting

- Eat 6 to 8 snacks or small meals a day, rather than 3 large meals.
- Eat foods that do not have strong odors.
- Sip clear liquids frequently to prevent dehydration.
- Avoid lying down for about an hour after eating.



Sore Mouth and Throat

- Try soft, moist foods with extra sauce, dressings, and gravies.
- Avoid alcohol, citrus, caffeine, tomatoes, vinegar, spicy food and hot peppers.
- Avoid dry, coarse, or rough foods.
- Take foods in the room temperature or chilled.
- Rinse mouth and gargle frequently with warm salted water or alcohol-free mouthwash.



Diarrhea

- Add soluble fiber such as apple, banana, oatmeal to your diet at regular intervals throughout the day.
- Limit / avoid insoluble fiber such as whole-wheat product, seed and skins of fruits.
- Avoid greasy, fried, spicy, or very rich foods such as curry, cream or cheese baked products.
- Increase fluid intake (1 cup equivalent to 250ml water for each diarrheal stool) to prevent dehydration.



Constipation



- Increase fluid intake to 8-10 glasses per day.
- Increase dietary fiber from fruits, vegetable and wholegrain products with adequate fluids.
- Drink prune juice, preferably hot, as a bowel stimulant.
- Increase physical activity, as able to increase bowel movement.

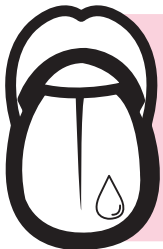
Dry mouth

- Try sour foods to stimulate saliva such as lemon, citrus fruits, sour cream, sour cherries.
- Sip on liquids or suck on ice chips throughout the day (aim for 8-10 glasses of fluid per day).
- Rinse mouth often with warm salted water or alcohol-free mouthwash.
- Avoid caffeine, alcohol and tobacco.



Taste Changes

- Use plastic utensils rather than stainless steel to help alleviate metal taste.
- Rinse mouth often with warm salted water or mouthwash.
- Brushing your teeth before eating may help.



Reference:

1. www.cancer.gov
2. www.cancer.org
3. www.oncologynutrition.org
4. *MNT for Cancer in Adults*

Please contact the dietitian for further
dietary advices and appointment

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